



State of Rhode Island  
***Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families***

April 13, 2020

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chairman  
House Committee on Finance  
State House, Room 35  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: Support for 2021 H 6122 – Article 16 – Relating to Housing

Dear Chairman Abney:

I am writing on behalf of the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) in support of the above-referenced budget article, scheduled to be heard before the House Committee on Finance. Article 16 modernizes the Housing Resources Commission; establishes a new Housing Resources Coordinating Committee and Deputy Secretary; and codifies the role of the Office of Housing and Community Development to improve coordination on policy, planning, and financing. Section 2 also incentivizes housing production and municipal housing development partnerships. These actions will ultimately increase the availability of affordable housing across Rhode Island and help strengthen families and communities.

Stable housing is a vital component of keeping children safe, healthy and together with their parents. Our system has seen in recent years an overwhelming number of referrals for families who are struggling to find affordable housing. Other parents involved with the Department are working hard to reunite with their children in foster care; and achieving stable, affordable housing is often a key step toward reunification. Also, young adults who have exited state care or are transitioning out of state care are often at high risk for homelessness and need affordable housing options.

We need to work together to find solutions. The Governor's proposed FY 22 budget, along with the recent federal relief packages, includes many investments that will provide immediate housing stability and ensure that the state has the array of housing options needed for all of its residents moving forward. Article 16 puts in place critical oversight structures to ensure that these plans and policies are well coordinated, and I strongly support passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Aucoin".

Kevin Aucoin  
Acting Director

cc: Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance  
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Legal Counsel to the Speaker